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REMARKS

ON THE

Rev. Dr. WARNER's

FULL AND PLAIN

ACCOUNT OF THE GOUT;

WHEREIN HIS

DEFECTS

IN THE

CURE OF THAT DISEASE

ARE

POINTED OUT AND SUPPLIED.

Printed for J. WILKIE, in St. Paul's Church-Yard.

PREFACE.

I SEE very little uſe for a preface, unleſs the author wants a friend to ſupport his ſyſtem, as is cuſtomary: I dedicate mine to Truth.

I am of an opinion, that mankind are not more depraved now than in former ages, nor will be more depraved hereafter than now. I believe that there is blended in all ages the Good and the Evil, in men; and if any piece is addreſs'd to them in any age, which carries weight with it; I mean a little more meaſure of truth, which is the Good than it does of error, which is the Evil; I then believe the Good, (which is the truth) in all men, will attract the truth from any

man

any man; and all men capable of attracting those truths, will of themselves defend them, for their authors.

I judge therefore of mankind by myself, and expect that those which enter into my meaning, and are not prejudiced by custom, profession, or interest, will vindicate me, as I do Paracelsus, from the vile slander of those who never read, or having read could not understand him.

'Tis the fate of many persons, on many accounts, to be condemned by the multitude; for if a false cur opens his throat against any thing, 'tis ecchoed by all the whelps which follow; they cry, crucify, crucify him, and being intoxicated with their own vile musick, they cannot stop, to consider the why, or the wherefore.

This

This outward hurricane it is, which overcomes the ſhame of reviling what they do not conceive; and overcomes them as inſenſibly, to themſelves, as the fear of death, to a fighting army, on the entrance of battle, by the noiſe of drums and trumpets. Truth, and the fear of death, always accompany ſilence; noiſe, prejudice, and paſſion, effectually can remove them both. Thoſe who are victims to ſhew and pageantry, will not be pleaſed with my entertainment; but if they are pleaſed to put away thoſe hindrances pointed at, and ſuffer me to ſpeak to the interior man, viz. the Good in them, 'tis odds but, in a dead ſilence, when prejudice and noiſe are away, we become better acquainted.

I here addreſs myſelf to a part of every man, but to the whole of no man, knowing

ing that vice and virtue are ſo coupled and blended in myſelf, (from thence I judge of others,) that I am obliged to put away my vice, that I may give my virtue fair play to judge of any thing; therefore the ſame I give, I hope to receive; I want not any favour. Try this piece with a free and clean, but not a dirty ſpirit; and then I ſhall be ſatisfied with the event alone, without calling to my aid the help of any name to ſupport me, but Truth.

REMARKS, &c.

IN a treatiſe lately publiſhed, in the title page are theſe words,—"A full and plain Account of the Gout; from whence will be clearly ſeen, the folly, or the baſeneſs, of all pretenders to the cure of it."——

This language may well be applied to the generality of perſons profeſſing phyſic, and the author's own labours to acquire the knowledge of a cure, may have worked up his imagination to the impoſſibility of it.

But notwithſtanding, if the author with the generality of mankind have failed, yet it is ſomewhat too poſitive to conclude from thence it impoſſible; for how many ſerve apprentice-ſhips to ſhoe-making, yet never acquire the ſkill of making a neat ſhoe; how many by tayloring, who can never cut out and fit a coat well. It may happen ſo in the art of phyſic. The general part of profeſſors, may arrive only to an indifferency in their art, and not to the perfection of it. Therefore it is no great wonder for the author, with the multitude, to fail in a cure for the gout.

Is it not unſeemly to hear a cobler affirm that nobody can make a neater

ſhoe

ſhoe than himſelf; or a bungling taylor ſay, there is no better workman than him.

And is it not equally as ridiculous in this author, to exclude all from the knowledge hereof. If it be true what this writer avers, philoſophy is vain, and learning is of no uſe, if it be impoſſible to cure the gout; but I think the language is not ſo modeſt as it might be.

You ſay, "every thing material by "the beſt authors on that ſubject is "taken notice of." If the authors, which you call the beſt writers, could not cure the gout, and there ſhould be a man living who from authors

has learned to cure the gout, it is plain that you have not read the beſt writers, or having read have not underſtood them.

The firſt words of your dedication to the duke of Portland, are, "though "it muſt be owned it is ſtepping a "great way out of my profeſſion to "write on a phyſical ſubject." This to me ſeems a great ſlip, and looks as tho' your divinity ended in ſounds. I really ſhould have imagined that divinity and nature are joined, and that your divinity would have led you to the knowledge of nature, which terminates in phyſical effects. When I look into the Bible, I do not ſee but nature is coupled with divinity, from the

the beginning of Moſes to the end of Revelation; for Moſes begins with the generation of the heavens, of the earth, of animals and man, and the Revelation ends with the water of life, a very little of which I ſuppoſe would cure the gout. I do not remember one chapter, from Moſes to St. John the divine, that is not applied to ſome part of nature; for I ſuppoſe it muſt be allowed that man is a part of nature; therefore the writer will do much better in future to ſay,—I confeſs I erred in my preface when I ſaid, that it was ſtepping a great way out of my profeſſion to write on a phyſical ſubject, for I now can clearly diſcover that it is ſtepping a great way into it to write truly on phyſick.—

In the firſt page of your preface you ſay, " notwithſtanding the many impudent boaſts of ignorant and intereſted men, their ſpecifics are an inſult upon common ſenſe : That the general part of the profeſſors of any art, fail of arriving at the perfect point, even of mechanical arts, as I have hinted, will be allowed by thoſe who know men and things ; what then muſt it be in the occult ſcience of phyſic, which is not the object of ſenſe? Therefore you ſay true, thoſe common boaſters, and thoſe ſpecifics generally ſold, are on the common principles of phyſic invented, according to the preſent ſyſtem of mechanical reaſoning, therefore you are nearly right in ſuppoſing them an inſult on common ſenſe ; but if a

ſpecific

ſpecific ſhould be diſcovered, from the divinity of the Bible and Teſtament, or from the occult principles of nature; or if it offend ye not, and join the occult philoſophy of the ancient philoſophers; I ſay, can ſuch ſpecific be an inſult on common ſenſe; no, that is impoſſible, becauſe common ſenſe cannot judge of a medicine ſo occult, common ſenſe muſt admire rather, and worſhip the ſilent effects of ſo myſterious phyſic; and when common ſenſe ſets about the enquiry of how came ye cured, the patient is as inſenſible as the man reſtored to ſight; and can only anſwer, I know that I was blind, but now I ſee: the gouty may ſay this, I know I was in pain, but now am free. True phyſic

harmonizes with our nature, and joins with us as a part of ourſelves; therefore it inſenſibly cures us, without our being ſuſceptible of it, and cauſes no nauſea, or ebullition, any more than water mixed with water would do, being of one nature, one quality, and alike. The top of your fourth page "it is affirmed by every phyſical writer, "that the gout is the inheritance only "of the acute and ſenſible, tho' others "poſſibly may acquire it, and to prove "which, philoſophical reaſons are not "wanting." 'Tis pretty clear that you meant to compliment yourſelf on your inheritance, as it makes for the acute and ſenſible.—There is no compliment in thoſe words, "in which will "be clearly ſeen the folly and baſe-"neſs of *all* pretenders to the cure "of

" of it;" if the word *all*, was *moſt* pretenders to the cure of it, there could lie no objection againſt it.—I think the *all* is not ſo acute or ſenſible; but you may fall under your own ſecond remark, " tho' others poſ-" ſibly may acquire it."

You have been acute and ſenſible thirty years, if I underſtand your book; I would ſay, you have had the gout ſo long; and you would inſinuate that acute ſenſibility always accompanies the gout, to prove which, " philoſo-" phical reaſons are not wanting." I confeſs to me it ſeems a ſtrange ſort of philoſophy, which you would produce againſt the poſſibility of curing the gout. If your philoſophy is true, 'tis a great misfortune for you, that you

you are acute and ſenſible to know any thing about it, ſince it will produce no healthful effects; 'tis as bad as being condemned without hope of reprieve.

If there is a poſſibility of ſympathizing in the ſorrows of others, I know nō greater woe than to ſee a brother whoſe eyes are ſtrained thro' pain and affliction, who ſweats in ſorrows both of mind and body;—whoſe ſenſible and acute ſoul is running over its philoſophy, and the materia medica, for help, but returns into its painful houſe again, after a vain and fruitleſs ſearch, and then bound in with the chain of mortal ſorrow, hopeleſs, deſpairing;—whoſe batter'd ſoul becomes

becomes paſſive as the body, and reſigns itſelf, with it to bear.

However the generality of mankind are bound in by their miſeries and ſorrows, without hope of relief, yet if we take a ſtrict view of them we ſhall find ſomething objectable;—I do not mean to doubt the reality of their pains and ſorrows, thoſe are the ſufferings of ſenſe, and muſt be true, but I doubt the truth of the philoſophy. We will examine a little into this author, from whence we may judge of all the authors he has read, and of the generality of mankind by this.—— Firſt, it is plain the philoſophy of this author is infirm, as his whole reaſoning is againſt the poſſibility of a cure; and ſo weak, as to be unable to take

take the uſeful ſide of the queſtion; namely, the poſſibility of a cure, therefore at once we may conclude it vain and unuſeful; conſequently, the compliment deſigned for the acute and ſenſible part of man muſt vaniſh, and the author may chance to be the ſubject of his own ſecond remark, "tho' "others may poſſibly acquire it." Now I know not what is contrary to acute and ſenſible, but dull and ſtupid; therefore it follows, that the gout may be the affliction of all, both wiſe men and fools.

In your preface you ſay, every fit produces ſomething new for obſervation, and may require various management of it in ſome few particulars.

You

You figure it under ſuch various circumſtances, that the advice of a phyſician you ſay is abſolutely neceſ-ceſſary, on account of age, conſtitution, and way of living. You ſpeak of numerous caſes of the irregular gout, and you name it the gout miſplaced: ſo in your eleventh page you ſay, in all other caſes reſpecting the gout, I hope every thing may be found here that may be neceſſary or deſirable. But to whom do you write, if your recipe is not applicable to any age, conſtitution or mode of living: if under theſe three circumſtances, they muſt conſult a phyſician, I confeſs I ſee not the uſe of your writing. I have made one remark on the top of your ninth page, which will anſwer all your preface.

The

The cauſe is one, men are natural animals of one ſpecie, therefore there need no variation of treatment as you aſſert; remove the cauſe, and all of every age, and conſtitution, are free.

I imagine thoſe few words a little conſidered, will dethrone your whole book, which conſiſts of 290 pages. Page ſixteen you ſay, "That the gout "is a diſeaſe from the retention of "ſome matter, whether urinous, ſa-"line, viſcid, tartarous, or earthy, "which ought to be diſcharged."

This difinition might have ended with the retention of ſome matter, for what ſorts of matter are there in the body, which fall not under one of the five heads, either urinous, ſaline, viſcid, tartarous,

tartarous, or earthy.—What by theſe words is determined? why I ſee not any thing!—for you mention every thing, that the underſtanding reader may be ſure you hit the mark in ſomething. You come to no determined idea about what the gout is; if you could not, why did you write? But I ſee it is to let the reader know what your opinion is, that the cauſe of this amazing diſorder will never be diſcovered: vide p. 13, and p. 15, "it "is a thing of an incomprehenſible nature," and if no notice (you ſay) is taken of Galen, Ætius, Paracelſus, &c. it is not becauſe you was ignorant of their opinions, but becauſe they are contrary to experience, "they are "vain, prolix and frivolous."

I never read Galen, nor Ætius, therefore know nothing of their merit, but I have ſeen and do admire the writings of ſome others you mention, particularly Paracelſus, who you rank as frivolous and vain! you, who in my humble opinion have not one true and determined idea, in your whole 290 pages!

To you, Paracelſus may appear, as you ſay, vain and frivolous; he appears ſo, this year, to Dr. Baker, who wonders how Eraſmus could in his own caſe conſult ſo wild, ſo illiterate an enthuſiaſt, as Paracelſus appears to have been. Vide p. 333, Medical Tranſactions, 1768.

So

So again. But it may reaſonably be made a queſtion, whether Paracelſus, who was very fond of ſaturnine medicines, in many diſeaſes, did not contribute to render this cholic more frequent. Vide p. 332, Medical Tranſactions, 1768.

But it may as reaſonably be made a queſtion, whether Paracelſus's ſaturnine medicines were leaden medicines; if they were, then Dr. Baker's argument againſt Paracelſus may be rightly founded, but that is to be proved. But what if it could be proved that his ſaturnine medicines were not leaden, and he who conceives they were, has not a philoſophical, but leaden head, be of what

college or ſociety he may, or his name John Nokes, or Thomas Styles.

I really obſerve that erudition and literature does not enlarge the underſtandings of ſome perſons, but I ſhould think it might teach them a little modeſty or common civility, or at leaſt a little diffidence; for I ſuppoſe there are few ſcholars but have found it eaſier to ſay than do.

I think it would become a civilized creature to be careful in not wounding the reputation of a deceaſed author, as much as his politeneſs is concerned in not giving offence to the living. For it is very difficult to be ſure of any thing, therefore becomes

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men well, to be ſure they underſtand, before they condemn.

Beſides, there may be ſome chance for their being laughed at by thoſe who can underſtand that incomprehenſible jargon they complain of, that is only incomprehenſible to an arbitrary and violent ſcholar, which incomprehenſibility melts and diſſolves away, by the power of an ingreſſible and ductile ſpirit, and which effect cannot happen in a mere literal ſcholar, whoſe mind is tied by the arbitrary ſignification of words, without their ſpirit. To ſuch, Saturn is lead, as in the caſe produced; Mars iron, Venus copper, &c. theſe are the interpretations of common chymiſts, common phyſi-

cians, common ſcholars.—Now, if this ſort of knowledge was good, in effects, there would be no bad chymiſts, bad phyſicians, &c. all would be good and true; but as the generality of the profeſſors in art are but indifferent, I fear their wit is blunted a little, and therefore put not the right interpretation on the words of ancient philoſophers.

The author of the Plain Account of the Gout, I ſuppoſe, would be thought a grave divine, yet ventured to revile, becauſe the ſpirit of Paracelſus produced no harmony in the brain veſſels; but on reflection, it might have fell on Moſes, whom Paracelſus underſtood;—but he reviled him he underſtood not. I wonder if he underſtands

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me. He ſtrayed when he reviled, and I ſtray from his book to tell him of it, I aſk pardon, and now return.—From the 16th to the 29th page you are anatomical: you might as well have been writing the hiſtory of America, for what that has to do with the ſubject. In the 29th page you draw to a point; I'll ſhew it you in your own words, and ſhould be glad to ſee your face when you read it. "Having il-
"luſtrated the general principle, that
"the gout is a diſeaſe from the re-
"tention of ſome matter which ought
"to be diſcharged, we may now pro-
"ceed a little further, and affirm,
"that whatever this matter is, whe-
"ther urinous, ſaline, earthy, viſcid,
"or tartarous; when it is not diſ-

" charged out of the body, by one " of the evacuations above-mention- " ed, it gathers chiefly in the ex- " tremities, and on the glands of the " joints. Phyſicians are not agreed " as to the nature of this matter; but " it falls under one or other of the epi- " thets above-mentioned, and it is not " here very material which."

You really have got into a wood, and cannot get out. You turn and turn, but one new idea you cannot produce. The gout is ſomething which falls on the joints; but what that ſomething is you cannot gueſs—'tis one of five—if there had been 500 ſubſtances in man, you might have been ſure it was one of thoſe. So it is one of five, but

but which you know not; then pray what are you writing about. Mark! the blood is compoſed of few principles, which are attractive of each other, and the whole number of pure principles are but two; the third, which is by ſome philoſophers called a principle, is only the medium in which the two principles act; but all bodies in their natural ſtate are corrupt, and there adheres to the medium a great quantity of aduſtive impurity, which thickens, and impedes the activity of the two principles: 'tis the various alteration or fermentation, for want of a greater degree of fixity of this impure matter, which is the cauſe of the gout. But I am afraid you do not underſtand me, tho' you read Moſes

and the New Teſtament, for in thoſe books are the true blood-making principles couch'd. If Moſes was underſtood by you, you had left Paracelſus quiet. The principles of nature were the ſame in Moſes' time, as they were in the apoſtles time; and the ſame in their time, as in our time; not one principle added, nor one taken away: and ſince the univerſe remains the ſame, what can be the reaſon we may not underſtand the conſtituent principles of the world, as well as Moſes, the apoſtles, and philoſophers. But you will ſay, what has this to do with the gout? Mark! I'll ſpeak to your memory,—there are three which bare record above, there are three witneſſes beneath, the laſt witneſs is blood.

Now

Now the gout is a diſeaſe, you ſay, cauſed by the retention of ſome matter, what matter you cannot ſay; but you ſay, it is one of all the matters, and it is immaterial which. I aſſure you the univerſe ſhould not tempt me to be ſo learned a ſcholar. Now if the principles of the univerſe are concerned in blood-making, both above and beneath, I ſhould have thought it would have concerned you as a learned divine, diſeaſed, to have looked into the library of Nature, and into the books of thoſe writers which had given us the hiſtory of Nature; and not into authors which did not ſow Nature. You plainly ſee that the dogmatical profeſſors of phyſic cannot cure the gout. I ſhould have thought

it

it would have been a ſufficient hint for you to have turned your back upon them, and have followed Moſes, Paracelſus, or Nature; as I did, who had a diſeaſe more troubleſome and fatal than you. But even ſuffering could not bring your learned ſpirit into the right road, tho' no good you found in the wrong. And ſo great is your infatuation, that you rail at quacks, and pretenders to cure the gout, when you are nothing but a pretender yourſelf. From page 29 to 43, you tranſcribe Sydenham's account of the gout when regular; from 43 to 51 is about irregular fits and railing. You ſay, the ſtrongeſt recommendation ſhall never prevail with you to meddle

with

with any medicine, of which you are not informed of all the ingredients.

I will now in this place do you ſome ſervice, by the help of a little matter, about the ſize of a barley grain, twice or thrice a year, or perhaps not ſo often taken, which will always remove your pains, and add to your happineſs and life. But as you have been ſo polite as to abuſe *all* pretenders, inſtead of *moſt* pretenders, and exalted yourſelf into the infallible chair; I ſay, on that account, you muſt ſnuff your candles, or ſharpen your wit, to underſtand me. Hear then! I have ſaid the blood is compoſed of two principles, to which there is much aduſtive impurity adhering, which thick-

thickens the mixture. There is a neceſſity for a certain thickneſs or temperature, to make one of the principles flow; the aduſtive property gives a degree of fixity, which ſtops precipitation; therefore, when the aduſtive property is wanting, fixity is wanting; then a precipitation enſues, which is the diſeaſe called the gout.

The buſineſs is to give the blood what it wants, which I have with brevity told; then the precipitations are taken into the blood again, flows with it again, and is not a morbific matter, as you and the authors you have read ſuppoſe. And tho' it be not eſſential to abſolutely pure blood, yet it is abſolutely neceſſary to conſtitute the

blood

blood of ſo impure a creature as man. Here then, Sir, has been your dilemma, in not knowing any thing about blood, nor one of the authors you cite;—you with them, and they with the croud, run from Nature, Divinity and Truth. Other diſeaſes are effects of too much aduſtion, which is the cauſe of death, as the gout is of too little. There is a neceſſity for a temperature. Some diſeaſes are removed by pure medicine, ſome by impure; and both the pure and impure are one; the impurity being removed by the artiſt, which ſkill is rarely found by chance, if not impoſſible; and which art is fully elucidated over both Teſtaments.

Take

Take then the little matter intimated, and you are free; which I have often ſeen, have done. I could have weighed your book down with a line, which is nothing but one continued negation from beginning to end. You are tedious about regimen, conſtitution, age, and a thouſand other chimeras which aroſe in you. You play with the ſmoak of diſeaſe, like others whoſe underſtandings ply in the ſame region; you forget, nay, you know not the cauſe; you never think of the fire which produces the ſmoak, but you catch, and want to ſtifle the ſmoak; but finding that vain, you preſcribe opiates, that the ſmoak may evaporate without your feeling it.

Pr'ythee

Pry'thee give your phyſic to the dogs, for I'll have none on't.

In your 53d page you ſay, "indigeſtion is the primary cauſe of the gout;" why ſo; what's the cauſe of indigeſtion? I ſuppoſe ſomething: what think ye of defect in the blood. I am ſure you have read Sydenham by halves, to affirm indigeſtion the primary cauſe; and if I can fairly drive your reaſoning ing back to the blood, who knows but I may be right, at leaſt as you, who you are ſure are wrong.

In the 70th page, ſpeaking of the matter lurking in the blood, and producing one fit after another, and a third again on taking cold, you ſum

up

up your argument and ſay, " And was I not in the right to ſay, as I did in the beginning of this account, that the whole cauſe of this amazing diſorder will probably be never underſtood."

I ſhould be glad to know who you are ſpeaking to, when you ſay, " was I " not in the right, &c." Pray are you not ſpeaking to the reader; if you are, I, as a reader, aſſure you as confidently as you thought yourſelf right, that I as a reader think you wrong; and therefore repeat your words and ſay, Am I not in the right to ſay, that the cauſe of this amazing diſorder is underſtood; and I preſume with as much weight as you can urge the negative,

which

which is, you always failed, and from thence judged it impoſſible; I never failed, therefore judge that the cauſe is abſolutely diſcovered. I leave this matter to others to determine.

The bottom of 84; " tho' this diſ-
" temper happens at any time of the
" year, yet it is moſt frequent in au-
" tumn; which may be owing in
" ſome meaſure to fruits eaten in that
" ſeaſon, and lying in a ſtate of putre-
" faction in the inteſtinal tube." Here is reaſoning, indeed! if the ſky dropt, you may catch birds: but if the gouty eat no fruits, and the fruits lie in a ſtate of putrefaction in ſome ditch, may not the ſcent thereof give him a fit. But what, if he go not near the

ditch, what then? will that preſerve him from a fit; no, no; you muſt to it again; this will never do, but with the multitude. Thoſe to whom the gout is propenſe, will be afflicted ſoon after the autumn, whether they eat the fruits, or ſmell them; or if they neither ſmell nor taſte them. Your thirty years ſtudy in this diſeaſe turns to no more account, than the profit ariſing from the ſale of your book; and if that was your end, you have it; the multitude are always ready for the vertigos of diſeaſed minds. The mind's diſeaſe is ignorance and error, and that is always in demand with the crowd, and inferior profeſſors of all arts. Therefore, Sir, there is good encouragement; write on, there are cuſtomers enow.

What

What if the cauſe of the gout returning after autumn be conſidered in this ſimple light, conſider if it be not as rational as your putrefactive fruits lying in the inteſtinal tube. I ſuppoſe when the ſun declines from the autumnal equinox, the cold weather comes in, the pores of the ſkin ſhut up, perſpiration ceaſes; then the ſerum increaſes, and the blood grows thin; the matter precipitates on the joints, &c. which could not happen when there was great perſpiration, for that left the blood thick, which is the alone cauſe of preventing precipitation; for there is great difference in fluids; for example, there may be many precipitations thro' water, which will not happen thro' treacle; therefore there is a neceſſity to preſerve

the temperature, which the aduſtive impurity does, to which place I refer you back; that preſerved, no precipitation can follow, conſequently no gout; therefore every perſon of every age and conſtitution are free.

From page 84 to 109, gives the various attacks of the gout from head to heel, wherein the cauſe of aſthmas and quinſeys ariſe, ſome parts of which are very reaſonable, particularly the bottom of page 94. 'Tis pretty evident that the ſuperfluous impurities or humours ſhould either flow with the fluids, or be diſcharged; for when they are ſeparated from the blood, they then either precipitate like tartar, or aſcend by the heat of the circulation, like

like the impurities of a boiling pot, or the ſea foam. The matter which falls, and that which riſes are one; and the ſeeming difference is cauſed by various heat, and thickneſs of the blood: In one heat and ſtate, it may fall, tho' in another it cannot, but is beat up by the continual circulation on the lungs.

There are not ſo great varieties of matter, which will flow with blood, as to neceſſitate any to ſuch indeterminate ideas, as to ſay, 'tis either urinous, ſaline, viſcid, tartarous, or earthy; for tho' theſe five qualities of excrementitious matter, appear to the phyſician of exterior ſpeculation, and who judges all things by ſymptoms and effects,

when they outwardly appear; I ſay, to ſuch a perſon the urinous, ſaline, viſcid, tartarous and earthy, ſeem ſpecifically different when they may all ariſe from one impure matter, and the differences be really made by the natural and chymical agents in the body. The ſeeming diverſity of humours falling on different parts of the body, ſeem to form different diſeaſes. The conception of the moderns, in ſuppoſing the humours really different in their nature and quality, drive them to as various, or a thouſand more various ways for cure; this falſe conception runs and ſpreads from author to author like lightning; and he who writes the moſt ſpecious account of ſymptoms and diſeaſe, and gives recipes for this time,

another

another for that time, and dwells on minute particulars, pleaſes moſt, and is called the moſt learned and knowing artiſt.

The modern enquirers into nature and phyſic, like the author before me, only believe what they can eaſily conceive, and confine their learning only to the moderns; and with this learned divine in his 109th page, "to this end, "paſſing by the abſurdities of the an- "cients," not conſidering the ſimplicity of nature; run themſelves into a wood of conceit, out of which it will be difficult enough for them to get, unleſs they really return, and reconſider the abſurdities of the ancients; which, in my judgement, ſo I do not

offend their worſhips, they fooliſhly paſſed by.

A hint of which I here will lay before them. The gouty matter, ſays this learned writer, is either urinous, ſaline, viſcid, tartarous, or earthy. So here are five ſubſtances. Now if the ſame ſort of wit was to be continued to the conſideration of all the metals, minerals, vegetables, and animals, with its further extenſion to the heavens; might there not be judged, (paſſing by the abſurdities of the ancients) five thouſand different ſubſtances in nature, ſince five are found independant on the real nature of man. I ſay, mowing down the wit and judgement of the ancients, at one ſtroke, might it not pretty clearly be proved, after their manner,

that

that there are five thouſand ſubſtances, and all ſpecifically different from each other; when Moſes, which the author may allow to be an ancient, affirms, that the heavens, the earth, and all things thereon, were made out of the chaos, therefore all the variety of ſubſtances, forms, and qualities which are in heaven, in and on the earth and ſea, all taken together are but equal to the chaos, and the chaos was equal to them all. How many diverſe ſubſtances there was in the chaos, was the buſineſs of this author as a divine to enquire. Let him aſk, therefore, his own heart, whether Moſes could not cure the gout; let him determine, for I ſay he could, or he could not; if he could not, I ſay he was neither philoſopher

ſopher nor prophet: I am ſure then you'll ſay he could, for notwithſtanding you paſs by his abſurdities, yet ſometimes I ſuppoſe you preach him a prophet, tho' perhaps no philoſopher.

Return therefore to the abſurdities you have paſſed by, and conſider from whence you was taken, and the ſimplicity of nature, which will lead you to very few things, but true; I mean your father and mother, the ſun and moon, whom you ſhould honour, that you may live free from pain, and that your days may be long in the land, which the Lord your God hath given you. Now laugh and ſay, what art preaching to me, who hath preached to ſo many, and ſo long. Yes, I am,

Sir;

Sir; here lies the difference between us; you preach words, I things. I forget; I believe you'll paſs by the abſurdities of the ancients, and what I have given you from them, I am afraid you have already loſt.

In your 115th page, you cite, "It is "agreed by moſt authors to admit of "only one cauſe of the gout; but not "one of them hitherto has diſcovered "this cauſe; and this hath produced "ſuch a multitude of ſyſtems relating "to this diſtemper." This is a good account of the dreamers you have read, who ſhift from ſyſtem to ſyſtem, incapable of forming determinate ideas, rejecting the abſurdities of the ancients, (to uſe your own words) and yet themſelves involved in the wilderneſs of conjecture,

conjecture, not ſeeing the firſt point of nature.

Page 135, "The people of Burgundy and Champaigne are free from the gout, and it is becauſe the wines are well ſaturated with ſalts." In 118, you ſay, Hoffman affirms, that beer cauſes the gout ſooner than wine; you ſay 'tis becauſe wine contains leſs mucilage than beer; now this is coming near the truth, but not the very truth, for your ideas are indeterminate about the mucilage, therefore you cannot cure; you may fancy you alleviate, but that I doubt. There muſt be ſome particular reaſon why the province of Burgundy and Champaigne are exempt, and if you could fix that idea, it might oblige you to adopt the abſurdity of the

the ancients, and reject the wiſdom of the moderns. There is one trifling reflection you may make, which is, that the abſurdities of the former times, could not be leſs fertile in performances, than the wiſdom of the latter; and what the ancients could, or could not do, you know not; but one thing you know, by thirty years woeful pain, that the wiſdom of the moderns cannot cure the gout; therefore this concluſion you may draw, granting the abſurdities of the ancients to be true, that their abſurdities was equal in effects to all the wiſdom of the moderns. But having taken the wrong ſide of the ancients againſt the moderns, what if I take the right ſide, and prove that thoſe which you call abſurdities were not ſo, but appeared ſo to you, not from their

defect

defect as being really abſurd, but from defect in you; their writings being a dead letter, you having the living outcry in your favour, ſay it is their abſurdity, not conſidering that all true and ſublime writings in all ages by poſterity are liable to the ſame mad cenſure; but I who ſee with a more equal eye, judge the living in this day to be as abſurd as in any former day, therefore think myſelf at free liberty to take which ſide I will; I then declare to vindicate the wiſdom of the ancients, againſt the abſurdities of the moderns, and will meet the modern wiſdom with the abſurdities of the dead in my hand, and do that with their abſurdities, which you in all your profound wiſdom ſay is impoſſible, that is, cure the gout.

Page 153 and 154, " In this con-
" dition the philoſophy of the patient
" will be of uſe to him, by teaching
" him not to dwell on the melancholy
" ſide of his fate, but to conſider this
" malady is as much the portion of
" this life in his conſtitution, as the
" common returns of appetite for his
" ſubſiſtence, and the only relief which
" he can have againſt much greater
" evils." I have heard people ſay, that the pains of the gout were as great as human nature could well bear, and this you call a relief againſt much greater evils; ſtrange reaſoning. God has, or he has not, placed in nature a remedy for the gout. If there be in nature a remedy, it becomes a reaſonable man to find it out; if not, then indeed,

indeed, you may ſay the gout is the portion of this life in his conſtitution, as the common returns of appetite for his ſubſiſtence.

But to propagate ſo melancholy a ſyſtem, becauſe you have found no cure, is the blind leading the blind, therefore you inculcate philoſophy to your pupils, to teach them to bear, like jack-aſſes, burthens they may eaſily throw off.

Page 164; "But when it is arrived at its height, if the pain ſhould be greater than the patient can bear commodiouſly, and his nights are ſleepleſs, then, notwithſtanding the prejudices of moſt phyſicians againſt opiates, he may

in

lieve himſelf by the following anodyne.

" Take of opium ſix drams, &c. &c. &c. take thirty or forty drops, and if the pain is not greatly abated, take twenty more; the number of drops muſt be proportioned to the violence of the pain, and repeated every night that the pain requires it."

No doubt but all mankind are fond of eaſe, all purſue it; therefore, 'tis no wonder we are willing to part with a portion of our ſenſibility to attain it: ſo, by a cold poiſon, here muſt be ſuppreſs'd our ſenſe of feeling, by congealing the nervous fluids, which give us that ſenſe: now, our feeling

being removed, is not removing the gouty matter which cauſes the pain, but it is taking ourſelves away from the gout, not putting away the gout from ourſelves. Now I aſſure you this is no new diſcovery, for I have in all ages heard, when pains grow intollerable, the patient grows deſperate, and will try every effort to ſave himſelf; firſt by ſmall doſes, as you adviſe, then, as you ſay, page 165, "proportioning the doſe to the violence of the "pain," to uſe your words, till at laſt they will call out for ſomebody to knock them o'th' head, to put away their ſenſes at once. The reſt of your book is full of remedies, regimen, citations and obſervations, full of wretchedneſs and ſorrow. I think myſelf obliged

liged to ſpeak once more to a remark of yours in page 176, wherein you ſay, "hence we learn that ſleepleſs nights "alone, if they were permitted, would "prevent the digeſtion of the arthritic "matter; and that whatever cauſes "ſleep will promote perſpiration; page "177, if it can be ſhewn that two of "the conſtant effects of opium, thus "prepared and doſed, as hath been "directed, are its promoting perſpi-"ration and ſleep." You conceive the morbific matter to reſolve, and to be carried off by perſpiration, tho' in different parts of your book you affirm, that all the morbific matter cannot be carried off, but that there is always enough left behind to form new fits, one after another, if great care and regimen

are not obſerved. Now there are ſeveral ways of reaſoning on the ſame point; but I know no better way to prove the truth of a theory, than trying its experimental effects; if thoſe then ſhould not harmonize with the conception, 'tis pretty clear that the reaſoning is defective and mere deluſion. Now if perſpiration, gained by the means of opium, could carry off any of the matter which forms the gout, then it muſt follow that the doſe and perſpiration continued, would carry off all the matter, and leave the patient free, which would be a cure; but this you poſitively deny, and ſay there is always morbific matter enough left to make the poor arthritic happy, in ſecuring him againſt greater ills; therefore

therefore I think we may, on pretty certain grounds, affirm, your whole reaſoning thereon fallacious, ſince the truth of it is incapable of proof. What then will be the conſequence, if we take it this way: therefore mark! perſpiration draws off the ſerous part of the blood, and as that departs the blood goes thicker, which ſtops further precipitations; and not unlikely, when the blood hath a ſtronger body, in which that which fell might flow. What think you, if a part of that which fell ſhould be beat into the blood again by the circulation; and ſo you may get eaſe by opiates and perſpiration. But then again this follows, when the ſeaſon, or perſpiration, for want of ſleep are unfavourable, the ſerum increaſes

creaſes, the blood thins and grows bad, the precipitations follow, and the wretched arthritic is ſo happy as to have the gout return to prevent greater miſchief; page 262, "for if "he is a man of ſenſe, he will not wiſh, "if it could be, to be freed entirely "from it." Another obſervation I have is, that you ſuppoſe the volatile ſalt ſpirits of the opium do attenuate the gouty matter, ſo render it capable of being carried off by perſpiration. Tho' this doctrine of attenuation by ſubtle ſalt ſpirits, is held in great eſteem at this day, yet it may nevertheleſs be untrue; for there are few conſidering perſons but will allow, that the more volatile ſpirits fly firſt, and do not beat in and penetrate downwards,

wards, whoſe quality is to fly up; therefore it is abſurd to ſuppoſe, from this reaſon alone, that a volatile can attenuate a fix'd matter, whoſe particles are ſo diſſimilar, whoſe gravity ſo unlike, and whoſe quality is diametrically oppoſite. Beſides, theſe mechanical ideas, applied by phyſical people in the operation of medicine, is more than whimſical; for Nature moves neither like the cogs in a mill wheel, nor like the levigating ſtones of the miller. Neither is the aliment ground down for nouriſhment in the manner ſhewn in many parts of that treatiſe. But there is an actual attraction of ſimilar ſpirits, not a mechanical attenuation of things diſſimilar, by the veſſels, &c. neither have the veſſels that power, for

their

their ligaments or texture is compoſed of the fluid mixture which paſſes thro' them, therefore they are better and worſe, and have no power of their own, but are relaxed or elaſtic in proportion to the ſtrength of the circulating fluid which paſſes thro' them. You may, therefore, now begin to alter your ſyſtem, ſince you are told that the blood depends not on the vaſcular ſyſtem for its health, but the tone or elaſticity of the whole vaſcular ſyſtem depends on the blood. To cloſe this account, the author of the Account of the Gout, is not of the opinion of his favourite Sydenham, whoſe moderation was much greater than his own. The firſt begins his book with, "From "whence will be clearly ſeen, the folly,

"or

" or baſeneſs of all pretenders to the " cure of it." Sydenham ends the hiſtory of this diſeaſe, with theſe words, (which ill ſuited our author's haſte to tranſcribe; Pechy's 2d edition, p. 493, " A perfect cure, whereby a man may " be freed from a diſpoſition to this " diſeaſe, yet lies hid, and I know not " when, or by whom it will be brought " to light; tho' by my long courſe of " thinking, I am induced to believe, " that ſuch a remedy will be ſome time " found out; and if ever it happen to " be, it will expoſe the ignorance of the " dogmatical; and then it will appear " how much they are deceived in the " knowledge of the eſſences of diſeaſes, " and in the medicines they uſe for them." That the author learned to ſpeak from

his

his mother, I believe; Latin from his maſter, I allow; and a wrong ſyſtem of phyſic from the moderns, I admit; —and that he extolls and immortalizes, as it were, Sydenham, but has not caught one grain of his candour or moderation.

P. S. I am not fond of over much labour, and writing for a mouth I leave to wordy men, who write for ſubſiſtence. My humour is brevity, which ſhould induce the reader to think, when ideas are crouded in ſmall room. In this ſmall tract is a little food for the caballiſt, the divine, the phyſician, the philoſopher, the chemiſt, and, I preſume, much for the critics: all are welcome to point their arrows at me: they may, for their own credit, keep their eyes open when they ſhoot, leſt if they wink, thro' fear their darts fly over me; however, if any thing here wants a further explication, the ſerious and candid mind ſhall be fully ſatisfied, there having been nothing ſaid, but what is the reſult of experience.